Introduction

‘In July 2006, we will be marking the sixth anniversary of the adoption of NEPAD. In this period, NEPAD has continued to grow from strength to strength. In the past five years particularly, Africa has seen a gradual change in the state of her economic and political affairs, by gradually shifting from being the only continent on the decline in the past decade, to an emerging strong global player with a bright future.’

President of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo,
Chairperson NEPAD Heads of State and Government Implementation Committee, NEPAD Annual Report, 2004/5: 7

‘NEPAD is a programme of the African Union designed to meet its development objectives.’

NEPAD Annual Report, 2004/5: 17

Introduction

The formal decision to form the African Union (AU) was taken at an extraordinary Organisation of African Unity (OAU) Summit in September of 1999. Two years later, in October 2001, the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD) was also adopted at an OAU Summit and a year later was adopted as the official program of the AU with regard to Africa’s development. AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring has been at the forefront of relaunching Africa’s regionalisation at the beginning of the 21st century. This is the third attempt to give life to Africa’s macro-regionalisation. The first was in the early 1980s with the Lagos Plan of Action agenda (LPA). This program was grounded in an African paradigm of development and was based on the concepts of self-reliant and self-sustaining development. With the defeat of this agenda, a second effort was made to relaunch Africa’s regionalisation through the Abuja Treaty, in 1991, which established a process to gradually form the African Economic Community by 2034. After a few years, the Abuja Treaty process ran out of steam with only a shallow process of market-led integration being encouraged in Africa’s sub-regions. The Abuja Treaty reflected important dilemmas facing African leaders. It emerged at a time when African leaders
were struggling to engage with and find a place in the post-Cold War world. This rethinking was later reflected in the consensus that underpins AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring.

The central place accorded to AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring amongst Africa’s leadership comes through in the statement by President Olusegun Obasanjo. Not only is he willing to claim, even with a bit of caution, the turn around in Africa’s political economy as related to AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring but is also willing to talk in terms of Africa being a new collective actor in the world order. In many ways, the discourse of Africa being a new and ‘strong player with a bright future’, speaks to the departure from a past in which Africa was victim of Cold War rivalries. It also speaks to a departure from a discourse of Afro-pessimism in the 1980s and 1990s, which lumped Africa together as a ‘basket case’ and generally represented it as a ‘hopeless’ and failed continent.

The politics of this new Afro-optimism derives from a new strategic engagement engendered by AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring with regard to fostering a partnership amongst African countries and with so called external development partners. This ‘golden partnership’ has dramatically changed perceptions of Africa at the beginning of the 21st century. Underlying this is a powerful ambition. For many African leaders AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring approximated an important beginning in Africa’s attempts to emulate European Union integration while fostering a recovery on the African continent on the scale of the Marshall Plan. AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring was riding the ‘globalisation’ wave to address Africa’s deep organic crises, as reflected in failing and weak economies.

**Beyond Regionalisation: The Conjuncture of AU-NEPAD Macro-restructuring**

Most interpretations of the AU and NEPAD place them within a state-centric interpretation of regionalisation. This derives from realist and neo-realist scholarship, on the one hand, and some variants of neo-Marxism on the other hand. Such interpretations
The study of macro change on the continent merely focus on state-led processes of integration. Within this scholarship, states provide the requisite agency and responses to globalisation and this explains Africa’s regionalisation. Within this study states are important but are treated as dependent variables located within a class analysis and understanding of contemporary Africa. This also means that AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring is not merely treated as aggregating to some kind of expression of unitary state interests. Instead it is understood as a class project. This is very different from treating Africa’s macro-restructuring as a regionalisation initiative or as merely an external partnership or narrowly as being about the functions of international organisation. These dimensions feature in AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring but engender particular class interests at a continental level.

At the same time, and particularly with realist and neo-realist scholarship, NEPAD is understood as narrowly driven by an economic dimension, championed by states. This study approaches AU-NEPAD as component parts of a multi-dimensional approach to Africa’s macro-restructuring. As a macro-restructuring initiative or class strategy it is about much more than merely laying the basis for political and economic integration. As a class strategy it reflects the strategic vision and commitment of transnationalising class forces on the continent to constitute a new African order. This African order is about deepening the globalisation of Africa’s accumulation structures, redefining state forms, state-civil society relations and Africa’s international relations. In short, it is about achieving a new model of Afro-neoliberal capitalism on the continent. In this sense, the study of Africa’s macro-restructuring is also a study of a class project with various dimensions. It is also a study of how AU-NEPAD is directly implicated in the process of transnational class formation.

Finally, this study approaches AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring historically. It attempts to trace the origins and roots of AU-NEPAD restructuring. Such an approach to historicising AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring recognises that it evolved out of the disciplining of post-colonial Africa in the conjunctures of radical state led projects and the conjuncture of debt and national structural adjustment. AU-NEPAD in this sense
reflects a shift in the relations of force on the continent that favours a neoliberalised approach. Such an approach is based on a post-Cold War and post-apartheid consensus about Africa’s macro-restructuring and has been in the making since 1989 on the continent and informs the present. The ideological shifts that prevailed in this conjuncture were crucial in determining the direction of Africa’s macro-regionalisation. However, the various strategic initiatives, programs and plans that emerged in this conjuncture of macro-restructuring to address Africa’s organic crisis, reflected more than a ‘big man’ or ‘big state rivalry’. Instead all these strategic initiatives reflected an evolving consensus grounded in the indigenisation of transnational neoliberalism. By the end of the 1990s, Africa’s macro-regionalisation was grounded in an Afro-neoliberal class consensus which forms the basis of Africa’s macro-restructuring. Hence, studying Africa’s macro-restructuring from this perspective entails understanding how neoliberalisation works as situated class practices that shift power in favour of this class project.

The New Scramble for Africa?

In the latter part of the 19th century Africa was carved up and shared out amongst leading European colonial powers at the Berlin conference (1884-85). This pernicious act gave us the horrors of King Leopold’s Congo and other forms of colonial oppression. Within African historiography these acts of imperialist expansion, colonial conquest, extraction and looting are referred to as the first scramble for Africa’s natural resources and wealth. Three important historical consequences flow from this: first, Africa was integrated into the international economy as a provider of primary commodities for the North’s industrialising economies. Second, Africa inherited the burden of weak states and malformed economies from this colonial experience. Third, Africa’s structural location in the old international economy and its colonially defined weaknesses have reproduced ubiquitous poverty and have constrained Africa’s development prospects.

In the context of the new global economy driven by transnational capital, is Africa experiencing a new scramble for its resources and riches? How is Africa being adjusted to transnational capital? The growth data emerging from the African continent has also
fuelled responses to these questions and the debate. According to the data sub-Saharan Africa began to show an initial growth surge in early 2001, up to 6.1% real GDP growth by 2005 from about 3% in 2000 (IMF, 2007). This trend has gained momentum with projections placing real GDP growth firmly on an upward trajectory. However, this growth trend has mainly been driven by Africa’s petro states. These are the most undemocratic, corrupt and in many ways underdeveloped states. The extreme social polarisation of these societies registers in various poverty and inequality indicators. The massive resources generated in these states are also not being channelled into national development strategies. Instead Africa’s petro-states are the flagship states of illiberal Africa. This prompts the question: does the resurgence of growth on the African continent in the first few years of the 21st century substantiate the new scramble thesis?

In the scholarly debate various positions have emerged in response to these questions and the growth data. The first position argues that Africa’s insertion into the global economy has to be increased. ‘Globalisation’ has to be brought in through neoliberal economic and political reforms so that Africa is not left behind and can benefit from the new transnational economy (e.g. Wangwe, 1997). From this perspective neoliberal adjustment of Africa’s economies since the 1980s has been the correct choice for Africa and needs to be continued. ‘Globalisation’ does not represent a threat or scramble for Africa’s resources but is instead an opportunity for development and integration. Such a rationale also underpins AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring. A second position has argued that the pattern of accumulation and extraction being experienced is no different from the colonial scramble for Africa’s resources (e.g. Lee, 2006). Except that the scramble for Africa’s resources involves new actors like China. A third position has also emerged which suggests a new scramble is happening; Africa is encountering a new phase of imperialism in which structures of inequality and power are being reproduced on a world scale (Bracking, S. and Harrison, G. 2003). Africa is on the receiving end of this process.

In this study an argument is made for understanding Africa’s relationship to the new global economy as being about a new scramble for Africa’s wealth and resources.

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1 See for example World Bank and UNDP country profile data.
However, the argument is approached and made differently. The emphasis of the argument is not on showing the consequences of the new scramble but on how it is happening in the new global conjuncture. Bond (2006), for example, makes a case for the ‘looting of Africa’ by mainly focusing on the extractive practices at the heart of dependent African economies, with South African sub-imperialism added to explain the new scramble. The argument of this study confronts squarely Africa’s new scramble but with a completely different conceptual lens and emphasis. First, the argument provides a distinction regarding the underlying historical dynamics of global accumulation. This study shows how the 19th century scramble for Africa was moored in particular historical structures. These historical structures facilitated capital expansion on the African continent through colonial domination. The rise of monopoly capital, the hegemony of the Pax Britannica and the ideology of free trade provided the conditions for colonial domination during the first scramble for Africa.

These historical structures - relations of production, hegemonic structures and ideological structures - are different at the beginning of the 21st century. The emergence of transnational capital, a US-led world order and the ideology of transnational neoliberalism provide new conditions for the expansion of capital. Moreover, in this study Africa’s place in this conjuncture is historicised to show how the links between post-colonial Africa and the new global economy, organised around the interests of transnational capital, have been established over the past three decades. The study shows how Africa was globalised in national spaces, since the 1980s, as part of the global restructuring of capital. This provides a useful premise to question the globalising ambitions of AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring.

Second, instead of utilising the critical conceptual lens of ‘imperialism’ or ‘sub-imperialism’, this study locates Africa in the new global capitalist economy through a different set of critical concepts and mechanisms of oppression and control. This study utilises the concepts of hegemony and domination/supremacy and its attendant mechanisms of consent and coercion to understand Africa’s geopolitical and structural location in the global capitalist economy. This study argues that Africa is experiencing a
new scramble for its resources but in the context of global capitalism. Such a social structure is guided by a global power structure made up of institutions, ideas and capacities. This global power structure is led by a US-led transnational historical bloc which has been determining the balance between coercion and consent in relation to Africa’s accumulation path (Nel, 2003). Consent is crucial to support the transnationalising elites on the African continent. Such consent and its framing of a substantive agenda for Africa’s development choices is qualitatively different and contrasts with the colonial domination experienced by Africa during the first scramble.

Third, and flowing from the previous point, is the relationship between ideas and social forces. To understand the new scramble for Africa, this study argues it is necessary to understand how Africa has been neoliberalised. In this study the ideology of transnational neoliberalism is understood both as the world view of transnational capital and an accumulation strategy of this class. This means transnational neoliberalism is an instrument to advance the class rule and interests of transnational capital. The process of internalising and embedding transnational neoliberalism in the African context, both in national and continental spaces, is crucial to understand how the non-hegemonic rule of transnational capital is being reproduced on the African continent. This relates directly to the making of Africa’s passive revolution; a process of reformist change led from above to ensure Africa adjusts to the interests and requirements of transnational capital’s expansion on the continent. This internal dynamic is also a new feature of how the scramble for Africa is taking place in the 21st century.

Finally, the new scramble for Africa cannot be put into perspective unless we bring into view the role of social agency, in particular the role of the transnational fraction of Africa’s ruling class. This class fraction has been engendered through structural changes on the continent and has developed its own political project – AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring - for inserting Africa into the global economy and advancing the non-hegemonic rule of transnational capital. This study looks at how this class fraction has internalised transnational neoliberalism and indigenised it as an Afro-neoliberal project through AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring. This is elaborated on below.
The Globalisation of Africa and Class Agency

Central to the argument of this study is that the new scramble for Africa is synonymous with how Africa is being globalised. Such a process of globalisation is understood as neoliberal globalisation. The latter form of globalisation refers to various concepts, discourses, policies and strategies that foster the restructuring of the global political economy in accordance with the interests of transnational capital. In terms of contemporary Africa it refers to a new round and level of adjustment to transnational capital. This process and form of adjustment is not happening in national spaces but at the continental level. AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring is the means to bring about this adjustment. This study does more than recognise AU-NEPAD as an Afro-neoliberal project but looks at how it operates as a concept of control to create the conditions for the non-hegemonic rule of transnational capital and how it contributes to creating the conditions for the reproduction of Africa’s transnational fraction.

This takes us beyond understanding AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring as part of a generic model of transnational neoliberalism, on the one hand, but also takes us beyond understanding Africa’s reception of neoliberalism as merely being about national structural adjustment programs. While national stabilisation and structural adjustment programs, in many instances led and even administered by the IMF and World Bank, affirm the neoliberalisation of African countries and its adjustment to transnational capital, understanding AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring as analogous to this misses the specificity of how Africa is being adjusted to transnational capital at a continental scale. Instead of the loan based conditionality, which was the national experience of

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2 ‘AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring’ has a distinct meaning in this study. It refers to a multi-dimensional class project to bring about a new African order of Afro-neoliberal capitalism and it also refers to distinct class strategies and practices that adjust Africa at the continental and sub-regional level to transnational capital as opposed to national structural adjustment practices. Adjustment and macro-restructuring share the same objectives and do not place the needs of Africa’s people at the centre of development but instead privilege the requirements, interests and ideological prescriptions of transnational capital.
neoliberalisation and adjustment to transnational capital, AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring adjusts Africa differently to transnational capital. In short, AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring shares the objectives of national adjustment to transnational capital but fosters such an adjustment through different mechanisms and class practices. Thus, this study focuses on the actual mechanisms and class practices (strategic concepts, discourses, policy frameworks and tactics) of AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring as part of understanding the strategic agency of Africa’s transnational fraction and its class formation. It tries to understand how these concrete class practices reproduce and advance a particular class project.

Africa’s transnational fraction has been engendered in the context of more than three decades of neoliberalisation and adjustment of Africa’s economies. Such a class actor has been structurally formed through the integration of African economies into particular global circuits of accumulation, through expansion on the African continent (and beyond in some cases) and through bringing in transnational capital. The latter has happened through various policies and strategies ranging from investment promotion initiatives, tax exemptions, public-private partnerships, privatisation and even export processing zones. Given the state-centred nature of most of Africa’s political economies, such a class fraction emerges both in the private and state sectors as they orientate towards the global economy. The ideological outlook, interests and practices of this class fraction have been expressed through key political actors on the continent, such as states and individual politicians. Supporting and leading this process is an Afro-neoliberal historical bloc of social forces that has been constituted around the interests of Africa’s transnational fraction. Such social forces include academics, think tanks, technocratic cadre in the African state and in continental organisations, the media and particularly financial journalists and liberal social movements, for example. In this study understanding the class practices of this Afro-neoliberal historical bloc and its leading transnational fraction is central to understanding how Africa is being remade.
The Evolution of Africa’s Passive Revolution

The concept of passive revolution is the main analytical concept in this study. It connects and assists with understanding the relationship between AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring and the new scramble for Africa. Put differently, AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring engenders the conditions for the new scramble of Africa’s resources by Africa’s transnational fraction and transnational capital but this happens through a politics of passive revolution. In the chapters that follow the concept of passive revolution is drawn from the work of Antonio Gramsci and has been brought into IPE through the contributions made by neo-Gramscian scholars.

Chapter 1 in this study explores and sets out its neo-Gramscian theoretical approach. It assists in clarifying how Africa’s macro-restructuring is thought of in a Gramscian way and how neo-Gramscian categories relevant to this study are utilised. This includes clarifying the concept of passive revolution and its usage. Africa’s passive revolution is about fundamental structural change and about remaking Africa from within and in the context of global capitalism. It is about producing an Afro-neoliberal model of capitalism from above. With Africa’s struggles for decolonisation and national liberation as a backdrop the affirmation and restoration of capitalist social relations, particularly transnational relations was not inevitable. Residues of anti-imperialism and anti-Western domination still chime with Africa’s ruling classes and its people. Also failed interventions by International Financial Institutions (IFIs) have also fuelled deep suspicion and resentment.3

Thus Africa’s passive revolution had to redirect Africa’s development path away from radical alternatives like ‘self reliance’, delinking and socialism, while attempting to present itself as a counter-hegemonic alternative to neoliberal global capitalism. It had to be seen to be ‘home grown’ and consistent with Africa’s paradigm of self reliant development and the national interest. As a class project and solution it had to claim to be

3 Cheru (1993) shows how in some cases deep discontent amongst Africa’s citizens have prompted them to opt out of the formal market economy.
an ‘African solution to a African problem’, owned by all Africans and in the general interest. Moreover, passive revolution in Africa had to also attempt to legitimize itself through concessions made to subaltern forces in the context of redefining Africa’s relationship to the US-led Northern centric power structure. The social agency of Africa’s transnational fraction is central to this process. Such a focus on internal social agency on the African continent provides a wider view on the social forces shaping and making contemporary Africa. It is also a crucial dimension that assists with understanding how Africa adjusts to transnational capital.

The entry point and focus for understanding Africa’s passive revolution is the African Union (AU) and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD). The AU-NEPAD Afro-neoliberal class project provides a useful entry point to place Africa’s passive revolution into perspective. The material roots of Africa’s continental passive revolution lie in its disciplined and externally orientated economies, which have been produced through structural adjustment and violent counter-revolution. The origins of structural adjustment and its implications for Africa’s post-colonial economic development are studied as part of understanding the disembedding and de-territorialisation of the market on the African continent. The disciplining force of markets and the catastrophic impact of Africa’s ‘great transformation’ are brought into view as part of a specific conjuncture: adjustment and debt. Accompanying this ‘great transformation’ is violent counter-revolution, as part of the vicissitudes of the Cold War, which ensured Africa’s state-led development projects were blocked. Africa’s violent disciplining is situated also within a specific post-colonial conjuncture that laid the basis for Africa’s continental passive revolution. Cutting across these conjunctures and also shifting the relations of force in favour of continental passive revolution was a weak and shallow democratisation wave in the early 1990s. The inability of this democratisation wave to move beyond narrow liberal constitutionalism further contributed to the disciplining of Africa. These conjunctures and the relations of force engendered provide the basis for Africa’s continental passive revolution. These issues are more fully explored in chapter 2.
Chapter 3 of this study explores the origins and content of the various strategic initiatives that composed a common Afro-neoliberal consensus for Africa’s macro-restructuring. This process of historicising the Afro-neoliberal consensus begins in 1989. This is when Africa’s conjuncture of macro-restructuring begins with the defeat of the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) by the World Bank. The ECA lost the battle for an African paradigm of self reliant and self sustaining development. This was supplanted by an embrace of structural adjustment policies and a call for a new Global Compact with Africa. Around the same time Nigeria’s former President, Olusegun Obasanjo, led an initiative for the Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in Africa (CSSDCA). The CSSDCA had important impacts on the continent’s understanding of the relations between safety, stability, development and cooperation and even informs the Abuja Treaty, which formed the basis for the African Economic Community.

Emerging out of the OAU in the 1990s was a renewed Pan-Africanism, with a strong emphasis on globalising Africa and finding a partnership with the world. Various declarations and meetings of the OAU in the 1990s lay the basis for a globalised paradigm of pan-Africanism. Finally, the merger of Senegal’s Omega Plan and South Africa’s Millennium Africa Plan lay the basis for the NEPAD. These initiatives lay the basis for a fundamental ideological shift in terms of Africa’s regionalisation and compose an Afro-neoliberal consensus that provides the ground work for AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring. Concomitantly the class project of Africa’s transnational fraction is launched with the formal adoption of the African Union in 2000 and the adoption of NEPAD as the formal economic policy framework of the AU. In many ways this approach to understanding AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring challenges dominant perceptions and explanations of Africa’s macro-regional politics. Historicising the Afro-neoliberal consensus as a class consensus, frames an understanding of African politics that looks beyond the rivalry of ‘big man’ politics or strong states.
Chapters 4 and 5 deal with the internal drive for Africa’s macro-structuring through the AU-NEPAD. These chapters take us inside this process. Africa’s macro-restructuring, as pointed out above, is not the same as fostering regional integration or building an international organisation. Moreover, Africa’s adjustment to transnational capital through AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring expresses itself through class practices that are distinct and different from national structural adjustment. It is also distinct from the legal compulsions and lock-in mechanisms underpinning European Union monetary integration, for instance (Gill, 2001). This study looks at how neoliberalisation works through AU-NEPAD restructuring as expressions of class practice and how this embeds transnational neoliberalism as Afro-neoliberalism. However, to understand this class project and agency and how this relates to Africa’s passive revolution, chapters 4 and 5 bring into view the various concepts, discourses, policies and tactics that underpin four of the five strategic elements of AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring. These are understood as concrete expressions of class practices. The first four strategic elements – the African Renaissance discourse and Afro-neoliberal capitalism; the making of continental partnership; the peace and security agenda; and contestation of civil society from above – assist in highlighting how the class practices of the transnational fraction of Africa’s ruling class have been operationalised. The study shows how power relations have been constituted to engender support for AU-NEPAD restructuring from above, and how an Afro-neoliberal ideological frame has promoted particular norms and standards to shape Africa’s political economy. These chapters explore how pan-Africanism has been redefined and assimilated to support the making of Afro-neoliberal capitalism and a globalised Africa; how states have been internationalised as part of embracing African partnership; how an Afro-neoliberal peace has been promoted as part of assimilating illiberal Africa and how a liberal African civil society has been composed as a bulwark against progressive African civil society.

Chapter 6 of this study explores the external dimension of AU-NEPAD restructuring. This is the fifth strategic element of AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring. This chapter provides a perspective of AU-NEPAD external partnership that rejects any assumption or premise suggesting such a partnership is symmetrical and based on mutual benefits. The
view of partnership in this study interprets it as more than a trade off between Africa and the Northern centric power structure. Instead external partnership in this study is understood in a geopolitical sense in which Africa’s place in the world order is being redefined by the articulation between its Afro-neoliberal historical bloc and the Northern centric power structure led by the US-led transnational historical bloc. More specifically it is about the hegemonic consent given to Africa’s transnational fraction and its Afro-neoliberal historical bloc. This is how Africa is brought into the Northern centric power structure.

This is different from a world systems view which privileges structural understandings and perspective on North-South relations, including global change (Denemark et al, 2000; Arrighi, 2002). For Wallerstein (1999:19-33), for example, structural processes define North-South relations, rather than the dialectic of structure and agency. Even when discussing anti-systemic movements, it is only structural factors that could enable a role for these forces. This means Africa’s place in a structural hierarchy of states is dependent on the relationship between external dynamics of world capitalism and particular states. That is, African states are integrated into the world system either as peripheral states or semi-peripheral states, depending on the degree of structural inclusion in the world system and the strength of the impulse for endogenous development within these countries. Class and national struggles and the social agency of particular social forces are not important in this view.

Instead, this analysis approaches the geopolitics of Africa from the standpoint of hegemony and in particular how consent and coercion impact on Africa’s place in the world order. This brings into view two important dynamics. The first is the responses of key institutions within the US-led transnational historic bloc to AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring. Such responses from the UN, the IFIs (World Bank and IMF), the G8 and the World Economic Forum express global consent for Africa’s macro-restructuring and define a global consensus about what Africa’s development means in the context of adjusting to transnational capital. In this regard, this study shows how Afro-neoliberalism is hegemonised and how AU-NEPAD becomes more than an African solution to an
African problem, but is actually a means to advance the interests of the US-led historical bloc. It is through this analysis that we also place the UN’s MDGs into perspective.

The second dynamic related to redefining the geopolitical location of Africa relates to transnational class formation. This relates to how a convergence is cemented between the US-led historical bloc and Africa’s Afro-neoliberal historical bloc. This study brings into view the formation of a common ideological perspective and shared interests. This contributes to deepening class formation of the transnational fraction of the African ruling classes at a politico-ideological level. Moreover, this common ideological perspective also provides the overall frame within which Africa’s transnational fraction has to act on the continent. In short, the geopolitics of Africa’s macro-restructuring places Africa in the world order through a social hierarchy that assimilates Africa’s transnational fraction and historical bloc into a US-led transnational historical bloc on the terms of transnational capital. This relationship also determines the balance between consent and coercion; hegemony and domination. It also defines Africa’s place within global capitalism.

The New Global Consensus on Africa’s Choices and Its Limits

In the conclusion to this study, we define the meaning of an Africa that is part of the global economy and is adjusted to transnational capital. Consistent with the overall argument of this study, we have to recognise that Africa has been globalising to adjust to the demands of transnational capital since the early 1980s. It was the first laboratory of neoliberalisation on a continental scale. The impact of the transnational neoliberal offensive rolled back radical state-led development projects and locked most countries on the continent into debt and adjustment. In the course of the 1990s Africa was deemed a hopeless and failed continent. Structural adjustment was not working and technocrats in the IFIs blamed this on corrupt elites and mismanaged African economies. Africa was defined as a ‘mission unaccomplished’. Almost a decade into the 21st century, Africa has taken on a new meaning. This is largely defined by AU-NEPAD macro-restructuring and its Afro-neoliberal consensus. More precisely, in this study, the meaning of a globalised
Africa derives from the consensus forged between the Afro-neoliberal historical bloc and the US-led transnational historic bloc.

This global consensus defines what contemporary Africa means. It is an Africa grounded in an Afro-neoliberal model of capitalism that is about: ‘African owned policies’; ‘African governance’; market-led, externally orientated and dependent; reducing poverty based on the MDGs and in accordance with overall debt management strategies and truncated representative democracies. An Africa adjusted to transnational capital means it advances the interests of transnational capital and Africa’s transnational fraction at the expense of Africa’s people. Will these choices really address Africa’s deep organic crisis? Is Afro-neoliberalism a development strategy? Transnational neoliberalism and its African version are not development strategies. We have seen the numerous failures of a neoliberalised Africa since Africa’s debt crisis in the 1980s. The logic of this ideological framework has merely ensured transnational capital advances its rule and dominance over African society and the state. ‘Real development’ has not been taking place in a neoliberalised Africa.\(^4\) Moreover, this global consensus and its choices for Africa’s macro-restructuring have serious limits. These limits are explored in the conclusion to this study.

\(^4\) By real development I mean a historical process that is profoundly egalitarian, enhances human capabilities, increases democratic participation in decision making, ensures ecological sustainability, encourages human solidarity and is autonomous.